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(54) Shoes

(57) A shoe (10) having an integral pull-on shoe horn comprising a counterpocket (50) bonded into the heel portion of the insole, extending up the rear and both sides of the heel to receive the heel of a foot, and extending up beyond the peripheral rim of the shoe in the form of an elongated rear pull tab portion (52) foldable from an upward position to a retained lower position down over the rear for fastening.

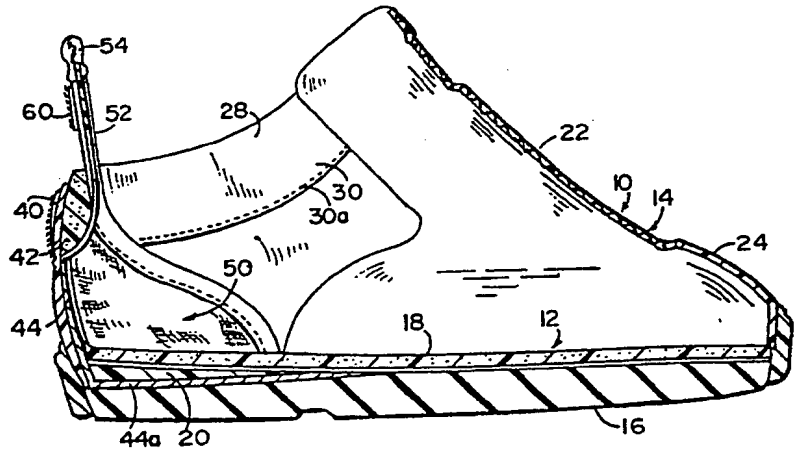

FIG. 2

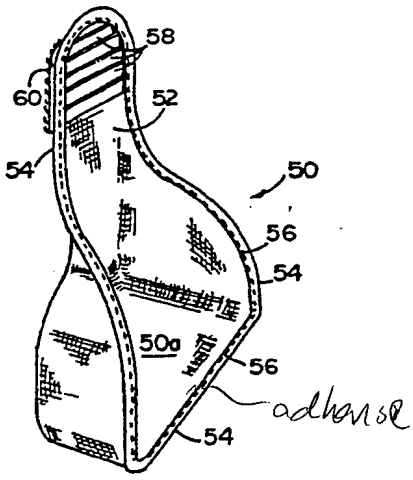

FIG. 5

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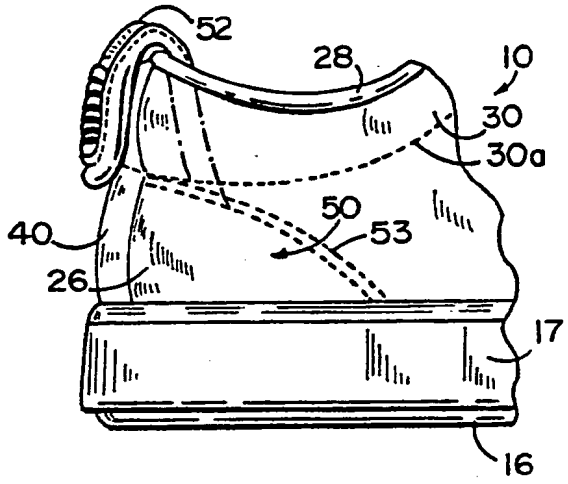

FIG. 1

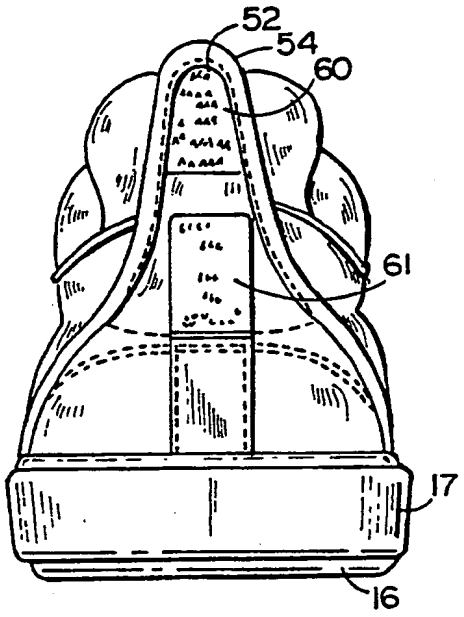

FIG. 3

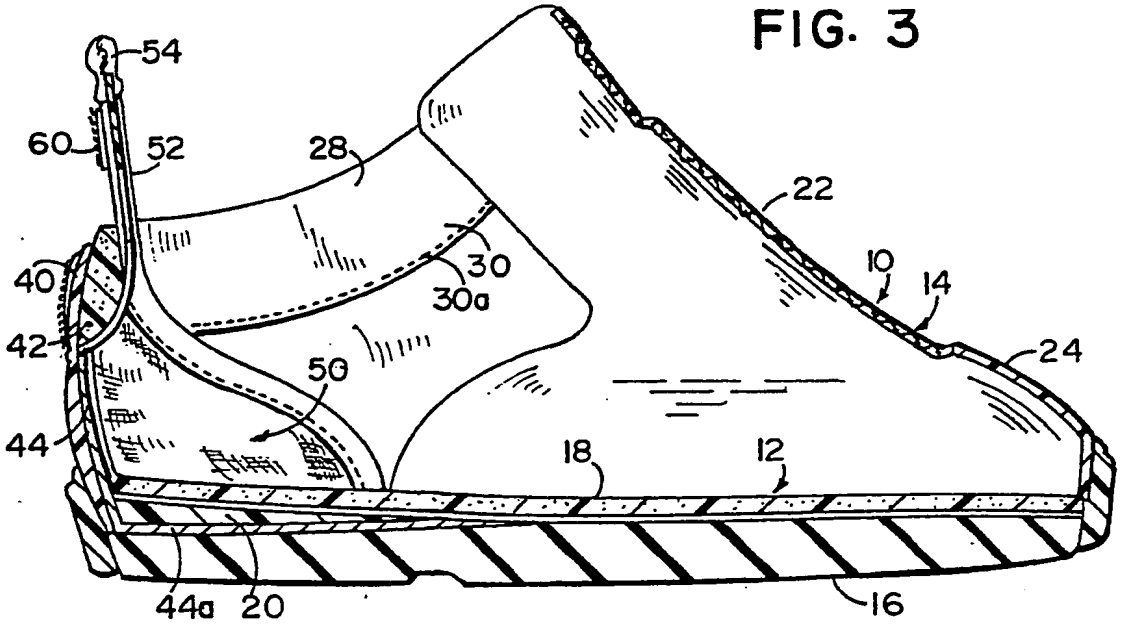

FIG. 2

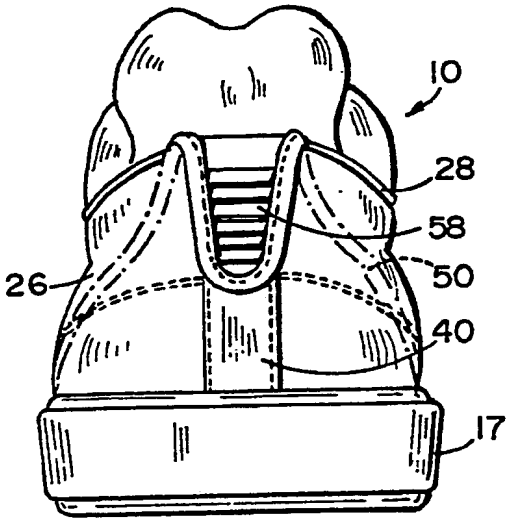

FIG. 4

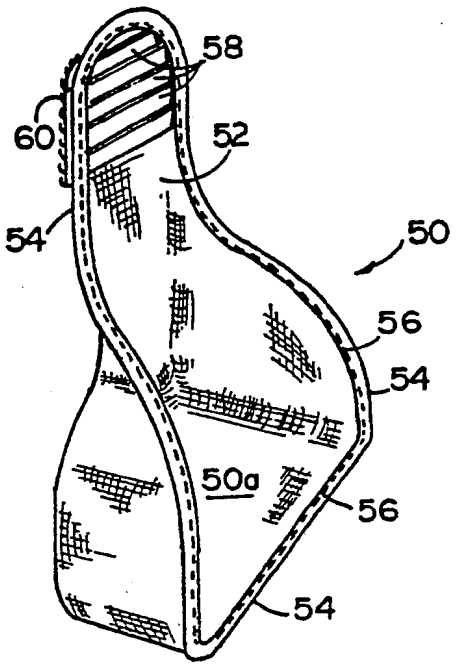

FIG. 5

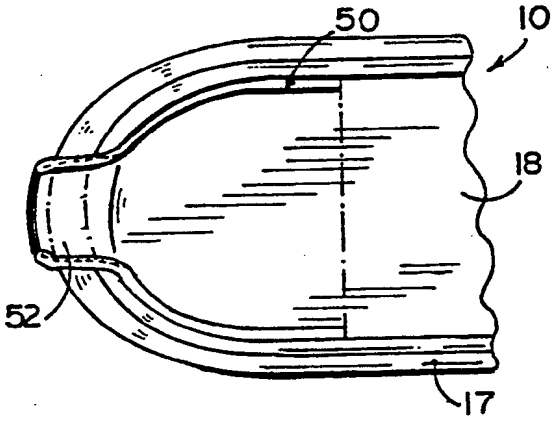

FIG. 6

Shoes

This invention relates to shoes, and more particularly to a shoe having a counterpocket, integral pull-on shoe horn.

Shoe horns of metal, wood or plastic have been known for many years, to assist entry of the foot into a shoe. Such devices are rigid, elongated, and curvilinear in cross section, as is well known, to enable temporary insertion beneath and behind the heel to serve as a type of ramp for the foot. While shoe horns are handy when readily available, and serve to lengthen shoe life, they are too often not at the location where shoes are replaced onto the feet. Moreover, youngsters typically do not take the time or effort to locate or use them. Rather, they simply thrust their feet into the shoes, to the detriment of the shoe counter.

Boot straps or pull tabs on children's shoes are of some help, but have shortcomings. Of course, the concept of having a bootstrap or a pull tab on shoes for ease of placing the shoe on a foot has been taught heretofore. Such a strap or tab is typically attached as by stitching or rivets to the shoe upper. Unless the shoe is made of very unusual overall construction, however, as in Epstein U.S. Patent 3810318, the tremendous stress applied repeatedly to the pull tab or boot strap too frequently results in its pulling loose, thereby damaging the shoe as well as destroying the pull-on feature. And, although the structure of US 3810318 would be expected to provide greater structural strength, the construction necessary for that shoe, designed especially for aiding children in learning to

walk, is not considered particularly desirable for other types of shoes.

According to the present invention, a shoe has an integral pull-on shoe horn constituted by a counterpocket comprising a membrane extending beneath the heel portion of the shoe and extending up the rear and both sides of the shoe heel portion to form a shoe horn and having an elongated tab portion extending up beyond the rim of the foot entry opening of the shoe, the tab portion being foldable from an upwardly extending position to a lowered position down over the rear of the rim.

The present invention thus provides a shoe having a shoe horn which is prevented from pulling loose and is pre-built into the construction. The shoe can be made by generally conventional construction methods, using conventional machinery.

Preferably, the portion of the membrane extending beneath the heel portion of the shoe is bonded to the remainder of the shoe; for example the said portion of the membrane may be bonded between an insole and midsole of the shoe. Alternatively or in addition, the membrane may be stitched to the upper of the shoe. There may be a gripping surface on the face of the tab portion which is forward when the tab portion is in its upwardly extending position to facilitate pulling on the counterpocket to enable the membrane to serve as a shoe horn as well as a pull-on aid, thus to ramp a foot into the shoe while the tab is pulled.

It is preferred for the shoe to include fastener means, for example of the hook-and-loop type, between the folded down tab portion and the rear of the shoe.

The invention may be carried into practice in

various ways but one shoe embodying the invention will now be described by way of example with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Fig. 1 is a side elevational view of the rear portion of the shoe, showing the upper tab portion of the integral shoe horn folded down;

Fig. 2 is a cross sectional view of the shoe in Fig. 1 with the tab portion elevated;

Fig. 3 is a rear elevational view of the shoe with the tab portion elevated as in Fig. 2;

Fig. 4 is a rear elevational view of the shoe with the tab portion lowered as in Fig. 1;

Fig. 5 is a perspective view of the counterpocket forming the shoe horn; and

Fig. 6 is a fragmentary top plan view of the rear portion of the shoe in Fig. 1.

Referring now specifically to the drawings, the complete shoe 10 includes a sole assembly 12, and an upper 14 attached to the sole assembly. Sole assembly 12 in this embodiment is shown to include an outsole 16, an insole 18, and a partial midsole 20 in a tapered or wedge form extending beneath the heel and the arch portion of the foot. This particular sole assembly may be modified in various ways, for example by having the midsole extend the full length of the foot in tapered or untapered form. Outsole 16 will typically be formed of a leather, rubber or rubber-like material while midsole 20 and insole 18 will typically be formed of a polymeric material such as an ethylene vinyl acetate foam.

The upper 14 is generally of conventional type including a vamp 22, a toe piece 24, and rear quarters 26, and having a foot entry opening surrounded by a

peripheral rim 28. This rim may include a reinforcing collar 30 as depicted, e.g., of leather or cloth, secured to the upper by stitching 30a. Upper 14 is made of conventional materials such as canvas or other fabric, leather and/or polymeric materials.

The rear portion of the shoe is shown to include a conventional back stay 40, optional foam padding 42 adjacent thereto around the collar portion of the shoe, and a semirigid, reinforcing heel counter 44 as of a polymeric material such as polylvinylchloride, polyvinyl acetate or the like. This heel counter is generally horseshoe shaped to extend around the lower portion of the heel above the sole assembly, having a lower edge flange 44a bonded between the midsole and the outsole. The main body of counter 44 is between the quarters of a special counterpocket subassembly 50 incorporated as part of the shoe.

Counterpocket subassembly 50 is particularly depicted by itself in Fig. 5. In vertical cross section, it has a generally L-shaped configuration and is composed of a leather or fabric membrane forming a pocket made up of a portion that extends horizontally beneath the heel portion of the insole and vertically up along the rear and both sides of the heel with the upper side edges thereof tapered upwardly-rearwardly to the top of the shoe rim, for defining a heel receiving pocket. The rear portion thereof extends vertically above this rim in the form of an elongated tab portion 52. Extending around and encompassing the edge of the periphery of this pocket, as illustrated, is a reinforcing binding 54 of U-shaped cross section, as of cloth or leather, which is stitched to the fabric by stitches 56. The counterpocket subassembly is stitched

to shoe upper 14 by stitches 53 at both sides and at the rear of the quarters. The tab portion 52 may be moved between an upright position depicted in Figs. 2, 3 and 5, and a folded down position depicted in Figs. 1 and 6. The counterpocket membrane is flexible so as to be a comfortable component of the shoe. It has a concave curvilinear configuration in cross section horizontally across its vertical portion, so as to fit smoothly against the rear of the wearer's foot. When the user pulls up on the tab portion as the shoe is put on, the tension on the membrane tends to temporarily rigidify the membrane to enable the membrane to act like a shoe horn ramp.

The forward face of the upright tab portion has a grip surface 58 as of horizontal rubber ridges for optimum pulling grippage by the thumb. The rear face of the upright tab portion, and thus the forward face of the folded down tab portion, has one part 60 of a hook and loop fastener on its surface, e.g., a "Velcro" (Registered Trade Mark) fastener, with the cooperative fastener part 61 being attached to the back stay 40. Thus, the folded down tab will cause mating of the hooks and loops to retain the tab portion in the down position until needed. The horizontal portion 50a of the pocket 50 that extends beneath the heel is bonded between insole 18 and midsole 20 with a suitable adhesive.

The sole assembly is secured to the upper as by stitching, adhesive bonding and/or vulcanizing. Around the juncture thereof is preferably a bumper strip 17. In use, therefore, when the shoe 10 is to be applied to a foot, tab portion 52 is pulled upwardly and rearwardly by the thumb and finger to release the hook

and loop fastener and place the tab portion in upright position with the thumb on rubber grip surface 58 and the finger, usually the index finger, on fastener part 60. When the forefoot is placed in the opening defined by arm 28, the integral shoe horn is used to ramp the foot in, as well as to pull the shoe over the rear of the heel. This is done without imparting undue stress to the structure or excess friction on the individual's heel, since it forms an integral pocket that envelopes the heel and is secured between members of the sole assembly as well as the upper. After the shoe is on a foot, tab portion 52 is folded downwardly over the rim and padded collar and against the back stay of the shoe to interengage the hook and loop fastener parts.

Various modifications are possible to the construction described. Thus, for example, the shoe can be a slip-on type, a lace-type, an athletic shoe, a walking shoe, or otherwise; the sole assembly can employ a different type of midsole or no midsole, a sock liner inside the insole, and unpadded rim, or various other modifications well known to those in the shoe making art.

Claims:

1. A shoe having an integral pull-on shoe horn constituted by a counterpocket comprising a membrane extending beneath the heel portion of the shoe and extending up the rear and both sides of the shoe heel portion to form a shoe horn and having an elongated tab portion extending up beyond the rim of the foot entry opening of the shoe, the tab portion being foldable from an upwardly extending position to a lowered position down over the rear of the rim.

2. A shoe as claimed in claim 1 in which the portion of the membrane extending beneath the heel portion of the shoe is bonded to the remainder of the shoe.

3. A shoe as claimed in claim 2 which includes a midsole and an insole the said portion of the membrane is bonded between the midsole and the insole.

4. A shoe as claimed in claim 1 or claim 2 or claim 3 in which the membrane is stitched to the upper of the shoe.

5. A shoe as claimed in any of claims 1 to 4 which includes a gripping surface on the face of the tab portion which is forward when the tab portion is in its upwardly extending position.

6. A shoe as claimed in any of claims 1 to 5 which includes fastener means between the folded down tab portion and the rear of the shoe.

7. A shoe as claimed in claim 6 in which the fastener means is of hook-and-loop type.

8. A shoe as claimed in any of the preceding claims in which the counterpocket is of leather.

9. A shoe as claimed in any of claims 1 to 7 in which the counterpocket is of fabric.

10. A shoe as claimed in any of the preceding claims which includes binding attached to the periphery of the counterpocket.

11. A shoe having an integral pull-on shoe horn, the shoe horn being substantially as described herein with reference to the accompanying drawings.